NOTHING IS FARTHER AWAY THAN HOME
GONE
By JOCK
DSTLRY

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LEE LOUGHRIDGE & JOCK: Colors
ANDWORLD DESIGNS: Letters
WILL DENNIS: Editor
EMMA PRICE: Book Design

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO
Dominic Reardon

WE DIDN'T TAKE **THE BRIDGE.**

WE TRIED SO MANY TIMES...BUT THEY ONLY HIRE **TOP-TIER** GUARDS FOR A TRIP LIKE THIS.

THE RICHEST OF THE RICH LIVING IN **UTMOST LUXURY.** THE COMPANY DOESN'T SCRIMP ON COSTS.

THE SHIP WENT INTO **LOCKDOWN** AFTER THE **SABS'** FIRST ATTACK.

"LONG-HAUL PROTOCOL," THEY CALL IT...

EVERYWHERE IS **EMPTY. DESOLATE.**

AREAS NORMALLY **BUSTLING... NOTHING.**

THE THOROUGHFARE. THE CONCOURSES. **DEVOID** OF LIFE.

JUST A SKELETON CREW RUNNING THE SHIP.

I'VE EXPLORED AS MUCH AS I CAN BUT I'VE BARELY SCRATCHED THE **SURFACE.**

THE **SABS** THAT GOT ME INTO THIS MESS HAVE CAMPS IN THE **GUTS** OF THE SHIP..WE STILL HAVEN'T BEEN FOUND.

THEY SPEND A LOT OF THEIR TIME ON THE **OUTSKIRTS** OF THE SHIP..

...AND TALK A LOT ABOUT AN **AWAKENING** AND A **HIGHER PLANE.** THEY HAVE A **BEACON** SET UP.. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO **ATTRACT.**

THEY SEEM SO SELF-ABSORBED TO ME--IF I TRY AND TALK TO THEM, THEY JUST START TALKING ABOUT **THEMSELVES.**

BUT THEY LET ME **CAMP** WITH THEM, AND I'VE BECOME USEFUL ON **RAIDS.**

WE GO OUT **HUNTING** TOGETHER--EACH DAY WE PUSH FURTHER. SOMETIMES LOOKING FOR FOOD... SOMETIMES LOOKING FOR **THE CREW.**

AND WE'VE DISCOVERED SOME **UNBELIEVABLE** THINGS ON THE SHIP.

THE **PASSENGERS** PAY A PREMIUM TO GO INTO **HYPER-SLEEP.**

THE SHIP CAN TRAVEL FOR YEARS, AND WITH THE **TIME DILATION** OF SPACE TRAVEL, ONLY A **FEW MONTHS** PASS BACK HOME...

...SO **THE ELITE** GET TO SEE **FARAWAY** LANDS AND ONLY AGE A FEW WEEKS WHILE THEY DRINK THEIR CHAMPAGNE.

MEANWHILE, THE SKELETON CREW WORKS FOR **25 YEARS** ON **MINIMUM WAGE** MAKING SURE EVERYTHING RUNS AS IT SHOULD--BEFORE BEING **DUMPED** BACK HOME.

THE **CREW** GETS WOKEN UP EVERY FEW YEARS TO RUN CHECKS--WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND THEIR **QUARTERS,** AND TODAY WE'RE **CLOSE.**

WE TAKE THE **CREW,** WE TAKE THE **BRIDGE.**

BUT THAT **SKELETON CREW** HAS GUARDS TOO, AND THEY'RE CONSTANTLY ON THE HUNT.

ON THE HUNT FOR **US.**

GOING ON **RAIDS?** CHASED BY **GUARDS?**

SOMETHINGS NEVER CHANGE.

...THEY HAVE US PINNED HERE. NOWHERE TO GO.

JDANG

SPANN

GGT

SPANGG

WITH THIS MUCH FIREPOWER, THEY MUST BE GUARDING SOME THING BIG-- FINALLY, THIS COULD BE THE CREW CHAMBERS!

DON'T WORRY, JAY. I'VE GOT THIS.

TEN YEARS OUT.

BLAH BLAM

BLAM

BLAM

SPANGG

SPANGG

SPANGG

IF THIS IS OUR BEST CHANCE OF GETTING **HOME**, I'VE **GOT** TO MAKE IT.

SEE YOU **DOWN** THERE.

I CAN **MAKE** IT.

THAT'S A HELL OF A **DROP.**

HIT THE **GENERATORS,** CLEAR OUT THE GUARDS...

...PUSH PAST THE HEAT LEVELS AND DEPLOY **THE CHUTE--**

--DEPLOY **THE CHUTE?**

COME ON...

IT'S **SKETCHY**-- MADE OUT OF OLD TARP...

BUT IT **SHOULD**--

SHRAMM

OOF!

CLOSE...BUT COMBINED WITH THE **FANS** AT THE BOTTOM...

UH!

OWWW...

THUMP

MOTION DETECTED. STATE PASSWORD TO ENTER CREW QUARTERS.

DAMN.

TRIGGER-HAPPY SENTRY BOTS.

UHHHH.

INCORRECT. STATE PASSWORD TO ENTER CREW QUARTERS

INCORRECT. LETHAL FORCE AUTHORIZED--

SHIT.

BLAM

BLAM

BLAM

INTRUDER ALERT.

INTRUDER ALERT.

...WAKE SEQUENCE INITIATED.

HUHHHHHH!

...I'M NOT DEAD?

JAY?

COULDN'T LEAVE YOU **DOWN HERE** ALL BY YOURSELF.

NOW LET'S GET ACROSS AND FIND THIS **CREW.**

COMPUTER-- KEEP MY POD CLOSED. CONTINUE ***MAX SLEEP PROTECTION PROTOCOLS.***

IF THESE ARE THE ***CREW QUARTERS,*** THEY HAVE TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE-- LET'S ***SPLIT UP.***

CAPTAIN

FINALLY.

Fssssssssss

TOK

BARRR!

YOU?

?

YOU'RE COMING WITH ME--

NO!

GET OFF!

ABI!

BAM BAM

ARGH!

CAPTAIN!

GET THEM!

STOP THEM--

BRAKKA

BRAKKA

SPING

SPANG

IT WAS *HIM*, JAY...ALL THIS TIME, *HIM!*

:COUGH: WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED? THAT WAS A **SAB.**

AND **SHE** WAS WITH THEM.

:COUGH: **FIND HER.**

ARE YOU **OKAY, SIR?**

YOU HAVE YOUR ORDERS.

"MOBILIZE. FIND THEM!"

THE CAPTAIN! ALL THIS TIME--

THE CREW WILL BE **AWAKE** NOW--WE'VE LOST THE ELEMENT OF **SURPRISE.**

WE **CAN'T** STOP NOW. PLEASE... THIS JUST GOT **PERSONAL.** I'LL MAKE HIM **PAY** FOR WHAT HE DID.

JAY! THE BEACON'S PULSING--**THE ONES** MUST BE CLOSE!

THEY'RE OUR **SALVATION,** THE SHIP MEANS NOTHING NOW.

YOU'RE CHASING A POINTLESS **DREAM.**

I'M DONE WITH YOU.

I THOUGHT **JAY** WOULD BE DIFFERENT.

MRRMMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRR

TEN YEARS.

REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO GET **CONTROL** OF THE SHIP...

...REPEATED **FAILURES.**

THE SABS ARE NOW COMPLETELY OBSESSED WITH THEIR DAMN **DEITY.**

ALL THESE YEARS **LOST,** AND I'VE NEVER FELT MORE ALONE.

I BARELY **SLEEP.**

I WONDER HOW **MOM** IS BACK HOME... IT MIGHT HAVE ONLY BEEN A **COUPLE MONTHS** THERE...

...HAS SHE HAD MY LITTLE **BROTHER** OR **SISTER** YET? IS SHE **SAFE?**

I'VE WRITTEN SO MANY MESSAGES TO HER. LET HER KNOW I'M AT LEAST **OKAY.**

MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO SHOW THEM TO HER...

...IF I EVER **SEE** HER AGAIN.

MRRMMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMMRRMMMMM

SHRANGGG

?

WHAT WAS THAT?

NO...

...GUARDS!

HIM!

UHH...

WHEN YOU GUYS ARE DONE PLAYING AROUND...

...FIND THE DAMN GIRL!

SIR...

...THERE.

FORGET THESE-- GO AFTER HER!

NO!

BY MYSELF... I CAN'T--

HELLO, ABI.

UHHH...

JAY-- PEOPLE ARE DEAD! STABBED!

AND THE BEACON! IT'S STOPPED!

ABI--IT'S BEEN A **LONG TIME.** YOU'RE COMING WITH US.

YOU **BASTARD.** I KNOW WHO YOU ARE...YOU **RUINED** MOM'S LIFE!

:HMPH: THE GUARDS ARE HERE. MAYBE I'LL GET A CHANCE TO **EXPLAIN** ANOTHER TIME...

THERE'S **NOTHING** TO EXPLAIN! YOU DIDN'T CARE ENOUGH TO GIVE UP YOUR **STUPID** JOB-- YOUR POSITION IN ALL THIS...

...YOU **ABANDONED** US!

ENOUGH. COME WITH ME.

THERE!

SABS!

HOLD IT!

PUT IT DOWN AND WALK AWAY.

SCREW YOU-- GIVE US THE GIRL, AND MAYBE WE DON'T SHOOT!

KRA-KOOOM

SCHHRAAMMM

SSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

SSHHHFFFFFFFF

SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

WHAT THE--

THIS IS *IT!*

THE ONES! IT'S ALL TRUE-- THEY'RE HERE!

OH NO.

HEAD TO THE LOWER DECK... ***MOVE!***

ABI!

DON'T BREATHE IT IN.

UHHHHHHHH...

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU ALL *DOING?*

DID YOU **KNOW** ABOUT THIS? WHAT **IS** THIS? **TELL ME!**

GET **OFF** ME--WE'RE WASTING *TIME...*

...YOU CAN JOIN US...

...OR STAY WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND DIE!

*THE SABS. THEY WERE ALL **I HAD**...*

*...WHAT **LITTLE** I HAD.*

*WHAT ARE THEY **NOW?***

LAST CHANCE, ABI...

HOW CAN I--

UH...

ABI!

I...DAD?

DAD?!

HEY, **ABI BEAR...**

...IT'S BEEN A **LONG TIME.**

COME ON, LET'S GET YOU **HOME.**

DAD! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S...

--UFF!

ABI!

LET'S GET THIS ON YOU...

HUHHH!

THERE SHE IS... HEY.

I... JAY!

HEY.

UUHHHHHHH...

JAY!

ABI...

IT'S BEAUTIFUL...

COME WITH US.

ABI...

THE CAPTAIN--

HEY, WAIT!

SSHUNKKK

LITERALLY EVERYONE...

...GONE.

MOM...

SSSS

INITIATE BREAKAWAY PROCEDURE.

BRIDGE-B, SAFELY DETACHED.

CLEAR.

LEAVE US. I NEED TO SPEAK TO HER.

SO WHAT NOW?

I WANTED TO SPEAK TO YOU ***ALONE,*** ABI. THERE'S A LOT YOU DON'T ***UNDERSTAND*** ABOUT ME AND YOUR MOM...WE--

I UNDERSTAND ***PLENTY.*** YOU USED HER AND ***LEFT.***

NO! IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE-- I ***CARED*** FOR YOUR MOM.

SURE. SAME OLD STORY. RIGHT? YOU GET WHAT YOU WANT AND ***LEAVE...***

...IT ACTUALLY ***IS*** THAT SIMPLE.

I COULDN'T GIVE ALL THIS UP. I WOULD BE ***RUINED*** IF WORD GOT OUT THAT I WAS WITH SOMEONE LIKE...

...SOMEONE LIKE YOUR ***MOM.*** I'M SORRY, BUT ALL I'VE WORKED FOR WOULD BE ***CRUSHED.*** I JUST COULDN'T DO IT.

SO, YOU'RE A **COWARD** TOO.

I **WAS.** I TOOK THIS CHARTER TO **GET AWAY...**

I THOUGHT I COULD KEEP UP **PRETENSE.** I'M UP FOR **FLEET COMMANDER--** I COULDN'T LET THAT GO.

BUT I KEEP THINKING...TIME HAS BARELY PASSED BACK THERE... YOUR **MOM...**

SHE'S STILL AS SHE **WAS.**

SHE WAS **PREGNANT!**

ALL I WANT IS TO GET HOME...WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS NOW?

I'VE BEEN **ABANDONED** HERE. YOUR KIND IS THE **REASON** WE LIVE LIKE WE **DO!**

IF MY MOM MADE YOU **FEEL** SOMETHING, I'M SORRY YOU WEREN'T **BIG ENOUGH** TO ACT ON IT. BUT IT DOESN'T CHANGE WHAT YOU **DID.**

YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHICH IS WHY I CAN **HELP** YOU, ABI...

...I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOUR MOM. I WAS **WATCHING** YOU...ALL THOSE **YEARS.** THE CAMERAS AT THE SPACEPORT WHEN YOU WERE **YOUNGER...**YOU WEREN'T AS CLEVER AS YOU THOUGHT.

YOU... YOU WERE **WATCHING** ME? WHAT THE HELL--

THE CAMERAS ONLY WENT AS FAR AS THE **CITY LIMITS.** WHEN YOU AND YOUR MOM MOVED...

THIS IS SO **MESSED UP.**

BUT THIS IS HOW I CAN **HELP** YOU...THIS CRAFT CAN GET US TO THE NEAREST COMPANY PORT...

...WE BOARD A NEW LINER--WE SEE YOUR MOM **TOGETHER.**

IF YOU JUST TELL ME WHERE SHE IS, I'LL GET YOU **HOME.**

WHAT ABOUT THE LINER WE LEFT BEHIND? ALL THOSE PEOPLE...THE **SABS.** WE CAN'T JUST **LEAVE** THEM!

THE SABS ARE **SCUM,** THE SHIP'S **INFECTED**...A LOST CAUSE.

THAT... **ENTITY.** IT'S A **PLAGUE**--A **VIRUS.** IT GETS IN PEOPLE'S **HEADS**...

CHANGES THEM FOREVER...

NO ONE ON THAT SHIP WILL BE THE SAME.

...I HAD **ONE FRIEND** ON THAT SHIP. YOU TELLING ME HE'S **GONE?** HOW CAN I **TRUST** YOU?

YOU DON'T NEED TO **TRUST ME.** JUST KNOW I'M YOUR **BEST SHOT.**

...

THE SUN-EAST SETTLEMENT.

THE SUN-EAST... THAT'S OUR HOME.

OKAY, GOOD.

THANK YOU, ABI.

HUH...?

HEY, LET GO!

STOP!

UFFFF!

ONE DOWN.

SSHHHFFFFFFFF

NO.

NOT AGAIN.

THE INFECTED SHIP **TRACKED ME...** FOLLOWED ME LIKE IT WAS **ALIVE.**

AND PULLED ME IN LIKE I WAS **PREY.**

I GUESS I HAVE SOMETHING IT **WANTS.**

WELL IT HAS SOMETHING **I WANT.**

THE SHIP.

ALL THESE YEARS, IT'S FINALLY IN FOCUS. WITH NO **CAPTAIN,** A CREW IN **DISARRAY...**

...I TAKE THE SHIP. AND HUNT THAT **BASTARD** CAPTAIN DOWN.

BEFORE HE GETS HOME.

TO MY **FAMILY...**

...BEFORE HE GETS TO **MOM.**

TO BE CONCLUDED.

issue

03

COMING IN APRIL

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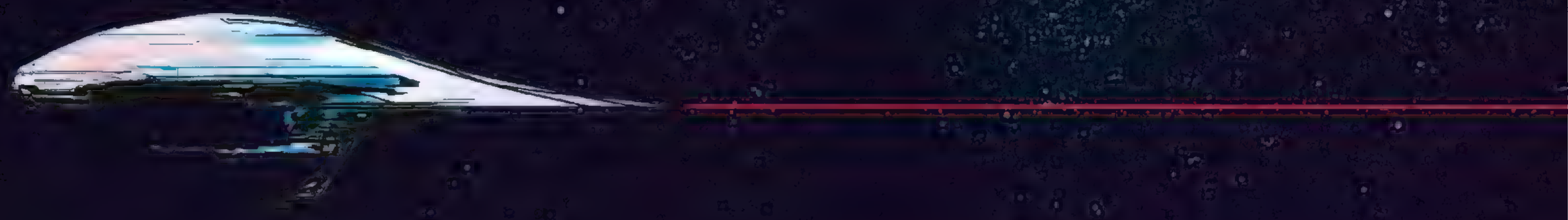

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DR. VINK

WITH A VA-VA-VA

A DR. VINK ~~POOR MAN'S~~ RIP

~ RIPPIN POORLY SINCE MAY 2022 ~

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